



MACHINE TRANSCRIPT • CORAGGIO CONSULTING

Prince William County School Board Meeting, Wednesday, October 7, 2026

Date Wednesday, October 7, 2026
Place Prince William County School Board, Virginia
Length 2h 18m (video)

- Official meeting video (YouTube): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B-wujWp6w5o>
- Official School Board page (PWCS): https://www.pwcs.edu/about/school_board/

Machine transcript (speech-to-text) produced by Coraggio Consulting. Not an official county record. Names and numbers may be misspelled; check the video at the timestamp before quoting.

Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-26. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:00] - The Prince William County School Board is called to order. School board member Mr. Richard Jesse is absent from tonight's meeting. The clerk shall record it in the minutes of the meeting. A motion is now in order for the approval of the meeting agenda, Ms. Wall. - Mr. Chairman, I move that the Prince William County School Board approves the meeting agenda as recommended.

[00:00:17] - Do I have a second? - Mr. Chairman. - Mr. Blake. - I second. - Okay, all in discussion? All in favor, raise your hand, signify yes. - The vote is six yes, one absent Lori Williams, one absent Mr. Jesse. Moving on to the motion to enter closed session. Motion is in order, Ms. Wall.

[00:00:34] - Mr. Chairman, I move that pursuant to sections 2.2-3711 and 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia, the Prince William County School Board enter closed session for the following reasons. One, to discuss with staff the assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining or resignation of specific public officers, appointees or employees of any public body pursuant to section 2.2-3711A1 of the Code of Virginia.

[00:00:58] Two, to review the grievance appeals employee T 27-001 and employee T 27-002 pursuant to sections 2.2-3711A 1 and 8 of the Code of Virginia. 3, to discuss and consult with legal counsel regarding requests for religious exemptions pertaining to specific students under section 2.2-3711A of the Code of Virginia. 4, to discuss with division counsel and staff actual or probable litigation and specific legal

matters involving staff, students, and other civil litigation involving the school division under sections 2.2 - three seven one one a seven and eight of the code of Virginia five to discuss or consider the acquisition of real property in the woodbridge

[00:01:36] Magisterial district because discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the school board and For consultation with legal counsel regarding this matter pursuant to sections 2.2 - three seven one one a three and eight of the code of Virginia and six To discuss and receive briefings by staff members related to the security of school facilities safety of persons using such facilities and actions taken to respond to such matters or discussion in an open meeting would jeopardize the security of Such facilities pursuant to section 2.2 - 3 7 1 1 a 19 of the code of Virginia Do I have a second? Mr. Chairman. Mr. Blake. Second. Any discussion? Please vote signify by raising your hand in the affirmative.

[00:02:15] Thank you. The vote is 6 yes to absent. Jesse Williams, motion passed. Okay, at this time the Prince William County School Board will now enter closed session

[00:02:22] and return in approximately one hour.

[00:03:41] - Start the Prince William County School Board. We're back in session from closed session to open. We have a motion in order, Jen Wall. - Mr. Chairman, I move that pursuant to section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia, this closed session of the Prince William County School Board meeting of October 7th, 2026 be certified by adopting the following resolution.

[00:04:05] Now, therefore be it resolved that the Prince William County School Board hereby certifies that the best of each member's knowledge, One, only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements were discussed in the closed meeting, to which this certification resolution applies. And two, only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard and discussed or considered by the school board.

[00:04:27] Do I have a second? Mr. Chairman. Mr. Blake. Second. Okay, all in favor, please vote. Or, I mean, any discussion? No? Please vote.

[00:04:50] The vote is six, yes. Motion passed. Okay, and now moving on to closed session action items 9.01, Jen Wall. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Prince William County School Board approves the appointments and releases of specific employees as presented in closed session.

[00:05:06] Do I have a second? Mr. Chairman. Ms. Zargarpur. I second. Any discussion?

[00:05:28] Please vote. The vote is 6 yes. Motion passed. Moving on to 9.02, motion is in order. Ms. Wall. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Prince William County School Board upholds the superintendent's Superintendent's Recommendation of Dismissal in Employee Case Number T27-001, and further that the chairman at large is authorized to provide a written decision to the employee reflecting the school board's decision.

[00:05:48] Mayor Paterson: Do I have a second? Mayor Paterson: Mr. Chair. Mayor Paterson: Mr. Blake. Mayor Paterson: Second. Mayor Paterson: Any discussion? Mayor Paterson: Please vote.

[00:06:06] Mayor Paterson: The vote is six, yes. Motion passed. Mayor Paterson: A motion in order for 9.03, Ms. Wall. Mayor Paterson: Mr. Chairman, I move that the Prince William County School Board upholds the Superintendent's Recommendation of Dismissal in Employee Case Number T27-002. And

further, that the chairman at large is authorized to provide a written decision to the employee reflecting the school board's decision.

[00:06:25] Do I have a second? Mr. Chair. Mr. Blake. Second. Any discussion? Please vote.

[00:06:46] The vote is six, yes. Motion passed. Moving on, 9.04, Ms. Wall. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Prince William County School Board approves an employee's request for reimbursement of legal fees in the amount of \$8,446 in accordance with the provisions and requirements of School Board Policy 594 and authorize the appropriate staff to process the reimbursement consistent with that policy.

[00:07:10] Mayor Paterson: Do I have a second? Mayor Paterson: Mr. Chairman. Mayor Paterson: Ms. Zargarpur. Mayor Paterson: I second.

[00:07:29] Mayor Paterson: Any discussion? Please vote. Thank you. The vote is six yes. Motion passed. Mayor Paterson: Moving on. Motion in order for 9.05. Ms. Wall. Ms. Wall: Mr. Chairman, I move that the Prince William County School Board approves the request for religious exemption from compulsory school attendance in case numbers RE26-5 through RE26-8.

[00:07:46] Mayor Paterson: Do I have a second? Ms. Chairman. Mayor Paterson: Ms. Zargarpur. Ms. Zargarpur. Please vote.

[00:08:07] The vote is six yes, motion passed. Okay, at this time, we'll do the Pledge of Allegiance. I'd like to invite our student representative, Marley Smith, senior at Freedom High School, to lead us in the pledge. To the Republic, one nation, two justice.

[00:08:36] Okay, so tonight we have two board members, Mr. Richard Jesse and Ms. Lori Williams, who are unable to attend due to personal reasons. And so we're moving on here. We're moving first off to our Thriving Futures focus.

[00:08:51] for everyone, everyone knows this is our opportunity to highlight the exemplary work being accomplished in our schools that fulfills our vision that every student will graduate on time with the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind necessary to create a thriving future for themselves and their community.

[00:09:08] The school board is proud to officially recognize these honorees for their positive contributions at Prince William County Public Schools. Tonight, we celebrate student excellence in career and technical education, academic achievement, as well as schools demonstrating an extraordinary commitment to environmental education and sustainability. We begin with Ms. Erica Tredenik of the School Board Representative for the Brentsville District to recognize our first honoree.

[00:09:28] Ms. Tredenik. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. This spring, students from across the Commonwealth competed at the 2026 Virginia Future Business Leaders of America, or FBLA State Leadership Conference. The conference featured more than 70 competitive events across a wide range of career and industry fields, including hospitality, marketing, finance, technology, and leadership.

[00:09:51] The Brentsville District is proud to recognize Amira Noor of Gainesville Middle School, who earned first place in parliamentary procedures at the state conference. Amira, your success demonstrates the communication, preparation, leadership, and collaboration skills that will serve you well throughout your education and beyond.

[00:10:10] Representing Gainesville Middle School this evening is Principal Edward Schultz. Principal Schultz, would you please share a few words on behalf of our honoree? Yes. Thank you, Mr. Dennick. Good evening, Chairman Lateef, members of the school board and Superintendent Dr. McDade. It is my privilege to recognize Amira Noor for her outstanding achievement in the future business leaders of America, commonly known as FBLA.

[00:10:32] And FBLA, if you don't know, it's the nation's premier career and technical student organization focused on developing leadership, academic excellence, and business skills. And through rigorous competitions, students demonstrate their knowledge, their professionalism, ability to apply real-world concepts to challenging scenarios.

[00:10:52] This past year, Ameri achieved an extraordinary milestone by earning first place at the Virginia FBLA State Leadership Conference, competing against some of the most talented students from across the entire Commonwealth. She distinguished herself through her preparation, her determination, and exceptional performance.

[00:11:11] Her first place finish provided her the opportunity to represent Virginia at the National FBLA in Texas, and this remarkable accomplishment reflects both her talent and her commitment to excellence. We are extremely grateful for her teachers, her family, and Gainesville Middle School community whose encouragement and support help make this achievement possible. Their partnership demonstrates the positive impact that a strong school community can have on student success. Amira exemplifies many of the qualities that we here strive to develop in Prince William County Schools she's a critical thinker a resilient learner and a future leader

[00:11:49] who embraces challenges and pursues excellence with confidence and integrity and we know that she will continue to carry these traits with her at Gainesville High School and beyond so today we are honored to congratulate Amira on the tremendous achievement and we thank the school board for recognizing her outstanding accomplishments thank you principal Schultz who else do you have

[00:12:19] with you here. Oh, I'm sorry. I thought I was missing somebody. Sorry about that. Amira, congratulations on this achievement. Thank you, Mr. Danik. Our next FBLA recognition comes from the Coles District, where Ms. Zargarpur has the honor. Thank you, Dr. Lateef. The Coles District is proud to recognize Drake Lewden of Charles J. Colgan High School, who earned first place in hospitality and event management at the 2026 Virginia FBLA State Leadership Conference.

[00:12:56] Drake has since graduated from Colgan and is now continuing his education in New York City. Drake, wherever you are, although you could not join us this evening, we congratulate you on this exceptional accomplishment and wish you continued success as you begin this next chapter.

[00:13:12] Charles J. Colgan High School is represented this evening by Principal Jeffrey Litz, who was pre-introduced by my colleague here. - Thank you, Ms. Agarpoor. We now turn from Career and Technical Education to the Extraordinary Academic Achievement category.

[00:13:31] - Ms. Argerport, please begin our recognition of these exceptional scholars. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. The National Merit Scholarship Corporation has named six Prince William County public school students as semifinalists in the 2027 National Merit Scholarship Program. More than 16,000 high school seniors nationwide were selected as semifinalists in the 72nd annual program and now can continue in the competition for national merit scholarships.

[00:13:54] Becoming a national merit scholarship semifinalist represents years of dedication, intellectual curiosity, and commitment to academic excellence. Our students here with us tonight distinguished themselves through exceptional academic performance on the 2025 preliminary SAT National Merit Scholarship qualifying test.

[00:14:13] We are incredibly proud of each of you and wish you best of luck in this next stage of competition. The Coles District is incredibly proud to boast four of our six National Merit Scholarship semifinalists. From Colgan High School, congratulations to Sujila Ahmed, William Hamilton, and Samuel Chung.

[00:14:31] Representing our students from Colgan High School is Principal Jeffrey Litz. Principal Litz, would you please share a few words on behalf of our honorees? - Good evening, Chairman Lateef, School Board members, and Dr. McDade. As a principal, few moments are more rewarding than recognizing students whose hard work, perseverance, and commitment to excellence have earned national distinction.

[00:14:54] Tonight, I am honored to celebrate Sajila, William, and Samuel, three outstanding students from Charles J. Colgan Senior High School who have been named 2027 National Merit semifinalists. This recognition places them among the highest achieving students in the nation and reflect years of dedication, intellectual curiosity, and academic excellence.

[00:15:17] In October 2025, these three students, along with the other students recognized here tonight, and over 1.2 million students across the nation, took the PSAT examination. Of all of these students, approximately 1% of them were named National Merit Semi-Finalists.

[00:15:35] While this honor highlights these students' individual accomplishments, it also represents the support of their families, their teachers, their counselors, and the entire Colgan and Prince William County community who help guide and encourage them along the way.

[00:15:51] Sajilo, William, and Samuel exemplify the very best of what it means to be a Colgan Shark and a Prince William County Public Schools student. We are incredibly proud of them and look forward to seeing all that they will accomplish in the years ahead.

[00:16:07] Thank you. - Thank you, Principal Litz. And from Osborne Park High School, congratulations to Devon Wanchu. Representing Osborne Park High School this evening is Principal Dr. Lisa Marie Kane.

[00:16:24] I wish to invite Dr. Kane to speak, to share a few words on Devon's behalf. - Good evening, Chairman Lateef, School Board, Dr. McDade, and all of our guests. It is my privilege to recognize this extraordinary student from Osborne Park High School, Devin Wanchu, who has been named a 2027 National Merit Scholarship semifinalist.

[00:16:49] This distinction places Devin among an elite group of students nationwide who have demonstrated exceptional academic achievement and outstanding performance on that PSAT. Earning National Merit semifinalist status is not simply a result of intelligence, It reflects years of dedication, perseverance, curiosity, and a commitment to excellence.

[00:17:12] Devin strives for continuous growth and uses his talents to make a positive impact on others. His achievement represents countless hours of study, a commitment to learning, and the support from educators and family members who have encouraged him along the way.

[00:17:30] A senior at Osborne Park High School, as well as the Governor's School at Innovation Park, Devon serves as Osborne Park's student senator. He plans to major in aerospace engineering and his specific passion is biomimicry, using designs from nature to engineer more efficiently and sustainably.

[00:17:53] His research has won awards at the National Science and Engineering Fair, NASA, and the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics. Devon is a proud Eagle Scout and this past summer interned at the NASA Goddard Space Flight Center.

[00:18:12] While this recognition honors Devin's individual accomplishments, it also serves as a reminder of what is possible when talented students are challenged, supported, and inspired to pursue their goals. He exemplifies the excellence found throughout Osborne Park High School, as well as Prince William County Schools, and he serves as a role model for his peers.

[00:18:34] On behalf of the entire Osborne Park High School community, I extend our heartfelt congratulations to Devin and his family. - Thank you, Dr. Cain.

[00:18:50] Thank you, Ms. Argapur. Mr. Denik, Brentsville District, home to another of our National Merit Scholarship semifinalists. Mr. Denik. - Thank you. The Brentsville District is proud to recognize Abigail Chang of Gainesville High School as a 2027 National Merit Scholarship semifinalist. Abigail, this recognition reflects the tremendous effort you have invested throughout your high school career and places you among an exceptional group of students nationwide.

[00:19:14] Representing Gainesville High School tonight is Assistant Principal Troy Washington. Mr. Washington, would you please share a few words on behalf of our honoree? - Good evening, distinguished members of the school board, Superintendent McDade, it is my pleasure to recognize Ms. Abigail Chang of Gainesville High School for her outstanding achievement as a National Merit Scholarship Semifinalist.

[00:19:38] This prestigious recognition honors some of the nation's highest achieving high school students and reflects exceptional academic performance, dedication, and a commitment to learning. Abigail's recognition is a testament to the hard work and determination she consistently demonstrates in the classroom.

[00:19:56] Last year, she completed AP Pre-Calculus with the highest overall percentage average among all 58 students enrolled in the course. This year, Abigail continues that tradition of excellence in AP Physics, where she once again ranks among the very top students in her class.

[00:20:13] Her AP physics teacher, Ms. Edith Rutz, shared the following about Abigail. What impresses me more about Abigail is who she is as a person. Specifically, she patiently helps other students all the time in all environments. When Abigail is in the classroom, I feel like I have another teacher in the room.

[00:20:30] Because her level of understanding is so high, she is always willing to use class time to help her classmates. She works with them at whiteboards, on paper, and on iPads. She never does the work for them, but rather helps them make connections and understand their own thought process.

[00:20:49] That willingness to use her talents to help others speak volumes speaks volumes about Abigail's character, leadership, and commitment to her school community. Achievements such as this are also strengthened by the support of families, teachers, administrators, and the broader school community.

[00:21:06] We are grateful for their continued commitment to creating opportunities for our students to learn, grow, and reach their full potential. Abigail's accomplishments exemplify important attributes of

the PWCS profile of a graduate.

[00:21:22] She also represents the very best of what we strive to achieve through the PWCS Elevate 2030 strategic plan. Students are academically prepared, confident in their abilities, supportive of others, and equipped to succeed in their future endeavors.

[00:21:38] Please join me now in congratulating Ms. Abigail Chang on this exceptional achievement and wishing her continued success. - Thank you, Mr. Denik. On behalf of Mr. Jesse, member of the school Occoquan district, I'm pleased to recognize our sixth National Merit Scholarship semifinalist.

[00:21:58] The Occoquan district is proud to recognize Sophia Ramirez Jam of Woodbridge High School. Sophia, your academic achievement, perseverance, and commitment to excellence have earned you this prestigious national distinction, Representing Woodbridge High School tonight is Assistant Principal Aaron Greenfield.

[00:22:13] I wish to invite Mr. Greenfield to share a few words on Sophia's behalf. - Thank you, Chairman at large, Vice Chairman, members of the school board and Superintendent McDade. It is my pleasure to recognize Sophia Ramirez, GM of Woodbridge High School for being named a 2027 National Merit Scholarship semifinalist.

[00:22:33] The National Merit Scholarship Program is one of the nation's most prestigious academic recognition programs, honoring students who demonstrate exceptional achievement and academic excellence. Semi-finalists represent the highest performing students in the country based on their PSAT performance and are selected from a nationwide pool of more than one million participants.

[00:22:54] Sophia's accomplishments extend well beyond the classroom. She maintains an outstanding 4.625 GPA and earned an impressive 1580 on the SAT. As a student of both Woodbridge High School and the Governor's School at Innovation Park, where she studies engineering, Sophia has distinguished herself as a scholar, innovator, and leader. Through her rigorous coursework, including AP classes and governor school studies, she is on track to graduate with approximately 84 college credits. In addition to her academic achievements, Sophia serves as a captain of both FIRST Robotics

[00:23:30] and VEX Robotics teams, founded our programming club, and mentors younger students, and has led numerous STEM initiatives that have benefited both her peers and the broader community. Sophia's achievements reflects the qualities of a critical thinker, innovator, and resilient learner, and we are incredibly proud of the example that she sets for our students.

[00:23:50] Please join me in congratulating Sophia Ramirez-Jam on being named a 2027 National Merit Scholarship Semifinalist. - Thank you, Mr. Greenfield, congratulations, Sophia. Congratulations to all six of our National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists.

[00:24:08] Our final recognition this evening celebrates schools that are helping students understand their connection to the natural world, an important role each of us plays in protecting it. I invite Mr. Blake, representative of the Neabsco District to introduce our Woodbridge District recognitions.

[00:24:24] Mr. Blake. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. The Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources has recognized 35 Prince William County public schools with Virginia Naturally designation for the 2025-26 school year, an increase of five schools from the previous year.

[00:24:41] Virginia Naturally is the Commonwealth's Official Environmental Education School Recognition Program. This program acknowledges schools that integrate hands-on environmental learning, sustainability, and stewardship into meaningful educational experiences for students.

[00:24:58] This evening, we will recognize the eight schools who've earned this designation for the first time. The Woodbrick District is proud to congratulate Fred Lynn Middle School on earning Virginia Natural League designation for the first time.

[00:25:14] Fred Lynn's recognition demonstrates an important connection between what students learn in the classroom and the choices they make in their community and the impact those choices can have on their environment. Fred Lynn is represented this evening by principal Inmar Romero and life science teachers, Sangir Pruk and Jessica Robinson.

[00:25:38] Congratulations to the entire Fred Lynn community. - Thank you, Mr. Blake. Mr. Wilk, Potomac District. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. The Potomac District is proud to celebrate two first-time Virginia Naturally Schools.

[00:25:56] Congratulations to Covington Harper Elementary School and the Independence Non-Traditional School. Your schools are demonstrating how hands-on environmental education can help students develop curiosity, solve real-world problems, and understand their responsibility to the world around them.

[00:26:14] Covington Harper is represented this evening by Principal Brian Slater, Assistant Principal Roberta King, and STEAM teacher Connerlyn Gaffney. Independence non-traditional school is represented by principal Stephanie Bretzke and technology education teacher Matthew Grimsley.

[00:26:32] Yes, may your futures thrive. - Thank you, Mr. Wilk. Ms. Wall, Gainesville district also has two first time Virginia Naturally schools to celebrate. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. The Gainesville district is proud to recognize Gravely Elementary School and Tyler Elementary School through experiences that connect classroom learning with the environment around them, your schools are helping students see that learning extends far beyond the walls of a classroom.

[00:27:00] Gravely Elementary is represented this evening by Principal Dr. Keisha Trammell and third grade teachers Katie Johnson and Alexis Clark. Tyler Elementary School is represented by Principal Jennifer Perilla, School Finance Specialist Carrie Hudson and Administrative Assistant Jennifer Nelson.

[00:27:16] Congratulations to Gravely and Tyler on earning Virginia Naturally designation for the first time. - Thank you, Ms. Wall. Mr. Dennick, Brentsville District. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef, the Brentsville District is proud to recognize Haymarket Elementary School and the Governor's School at Innovation Park for earning Virginia Naturally designation for the first time.

[00:27:40] From our youngest learners to students engaged in advanced research and innovation, environmental learning encourages students to observe, question, investigate, and consider innovative solutions to the challenges facing our world. Haymarket Elementary School is represented this evening by Principal Nicole Mills, Administrative Assistant Leanne Mayer, and STEAM teacher, Amy Hale.

[00:28:01] I wish to recognize the Governor's School at Innovation Park. Director, Jason Calhoun, could not attend this evening as his mother recently passed away. We send our condolences to Dr. Calhoun and his family. Congratulations to both school communities.

[00:28:19] - Thank you, Mr. Denik. Next, we have our final first-time Virginia Naturally recipient. The Occoquan District is proud to recognize Lake Ridge Elementary School for earning Virginia Naturally designation for the first time. This recognition reflects the work of students and educators who made environmental learning an active and meaningful part of the school experience.

[00:28:37] Lake Ridge Elementary is represented this evening by Principal Abigail Martinez, Parent Liaison Anna Batres, and Administrative Assistant Tammy Harris. Congratulations to the entire Lake Ridge Elementary community. These recognitions also reflect the collaboration that occurs across our school division to create opportunities for environmental education and sustainable practices.

[00:28:58] Joining us this evening is Melinda Landry, Sustainability Coordinator with the Energy Systems and sustainability in the facilities department. Melinda, I invite you to share a few words on behalf of our Virginia Naturally Schools. - Good evening, Dr. Lateef, members of the school board and Dr. McDade. As you said, I am Melinda Landry.

[00:29:15] I'm a sustainability coordinator with Energy Systems and sustainability in the facilities department. Hello, I'm honored to speak on behalf of the eight schools that you see being recognized here tonight for the first time as Virginia Naturally Schools and the 27 additional schools that are celebrating the continued growth of their programs.

[00:29:35] As you said, Virginia naturally is the Commonwealth's official school recognition program for environmental education, which is managed by the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources. Schools can earn this designation multiple times by demonstrating, excuse me, continuous improvement in environmental education.

[00:29:55] Thank you for recognizing their achievements and for celebrating their commitment to environmental literacy and sustainability across our PWCS community. Our 35 total Virginia Naturally Schools, along with the 12 nationally certified eco-schools, integrate environmental literacy throughout their school day.

[00:30:17] They embrace project-based learning, and they create conditions for students to be explorers, where they can ask questions and connect the learning to the world around them through outdoor exploration. These schools reflect the values of Prince William County Schools Elevate 2030 Strategic Plan by providing high quality learning experiences across content areas, both in and out of the classroom, and by using their buildings and grounds as teaching tools.

[00:30:49] We're incredibly proud of each school's efforts and the contributions made by their sustainability liaisons that you see here. All of these schools also participate in the PWCS EcoQuest, our annual incentive-based program that promotes energy conservation and sustainability through hands-on, student-centered learning.

[00:31:14] Their work supports our division's goals to reduce our carbon footprint and protect the environment. Thank you to the school board, to Dr. McDade, for recognizing our Virginia Naturally schools this evening. And thank you to the administrators, staff, and school communities for their dedication to environmental literacy.

[00:31:36] Their leadership helps equip our students with the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind necessary to create thriving, sustainable futures for themselves and for our community.

[00:31:53] Together, we're building a resilient and environmentally conscious PWCS, so thank you. - Thank you, Ms. Landry, and we'll take that as a note to amend the mission and vision statement.

[00:32:12] I would now like to take the opportunity to invite our honorees, friends, families, coaches, teachers, colleagues, and other supporters here tonight to stand in recognition of the significant role you have played in the success of our distinguished guest. All family members, teachers in the back, please stand and be recognized.

[00:32:35] Okay, a lot of shy people back there. Okay, before we take a few pictures, Superintendent McDade would like to share a few words. Dr. McDade. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. Tonight's recognition demonstrates just how many ways our students and schools are preparing to create thriving futures.

[00:32:51] Amira, your success through FBLA shows what happens when students take what they learn and apply it to real world challenges. You have demonstrated career ready skills that will continue to serve you wherever your future takes you. To our six National Merit Scholarship semifinalists, you have distinguished yourselves among some of the strongest students in the nation.

[00:33:11] Your honor reflects the critical thinking, resilience, and vision we want all PWCS students to achieve. And to our 35 Virginia Naturally Schools, especially to the eight first-time recipients here with us tonight, you remind us that preparing students means helping them understand the world they will inherit.

[00:33:32] The accomplishments this evening represent different areas of learning, but they all show how students and educators are taking knowledge beyond the classroom and using it with purpose. Congratulations to each of you on these remarkable accomplishments.

[00:33:48] We are PWCS proud. - Thank you, Dr. McDade. At this time, I'd like to request our honorees to come forward in photos with the school board

[00:34:01] and receive a small token of our appreciation.

[00:39:28] Okay, great. That's wonderful. OK, up next, we are going to adopt the consent agenda. Ms. Wall. Ms. Dr. Lateef, I move that the Prince William County School Board approves the public meeting consent agenda as recommended. Mr. Do I have a second?

[00:39:44] Mr. Mr. Chair. Ms. Bargapur. Ms. I second. Mr. Any discussion? Please vote.

[00:40:05] Ms. Voted six, yes. Motion passed. Mr. Acknowledgements and recognitions, 1301 approval. Ms. Wall. Ms. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Prince William County School Board approves the adoption of the acknowledgements and recognitions as recommended. Mr. Do I have a second? Mr. Mr. Chairman. Mr. Blake. Any discussion?

[00:40:20] Please vote.

[00:40:41] Hello? The vote is five yes, one abstained. Tradenik. Motion passed. Okay, citizen comment time. Those citizens who've signed up in advance with the clerk may address the school board this evening when they are called to the podium.

[00:40:58] The citizen comment period for regular school board meetings is one hour and citizens may speak on the agenda items or other topics germane to the operations and policies of PWCS. We use proper, please use proper decorum and manners while at the podium or you'll be asked to step aside. We ask that

the audience please be respectful of each speaker and refrain from any clapping, cheering, or jeering hearing to avoid disruption of the meeting.

[00:41:19] If you do not do so, the board will recess, and I'll ask that the room be cleared to restore public order. Tonight we have 18 citizens signed up to speak. When I call your name, please come to the podium and state your name and address for the record. Per policy, 1:34, the time allotted for each speaker will be three minutes. I'll call the first five in order.

[00:41:36] If you want to come up, you certainly can for seats up front, but the first five will be Carl Greeten, Shannara Fountain, Sam Philiben, Rich Philobin Yorty Lopez, Carl Greton.

[00:41:58] - Good evening, I'm Carl Greton from the Gainesville District. I am with over 80% of the population that agrees that boys should not play in girls sports. Unfortunately, our Democrat friends have refused to listen to people you represent. Let's do what Democrats request.

[00:42:14] Our governor, board of supervisors, and specifically our Prince William County School Board is saying this process is okay. Let's perform the Democrats' crazy statement. Reach out to all parents, teachers, coaches, students, and adults to support boys and girls sports.

[00:42:32] Let's pack the teams with boys. Forget common sense. If you want to win, ask all boys to join girls teams. We know the boys will not need to try out because of all the reasons we have stated in the past. As a parent, coach, or spectator, just imagine the success a boy will have.

[00:42:50] He will be a champion. He will receive awards. He will get acceptances to better leagues, better school admission, and more acceptance within the community. Participation trophies will be eliminated. What will PwC have to accomplish?

[00:43:05] You'll have to change the name from girl sports to he/she sports and increase the number of students in thriving futures. From this stance, you will not care about girls anymore. They can go out and do something different. We would expect to see the Brentsville boys who participate in the state championships to make a run deep into the he/she soccer program.

[00:43:26] The Prince William County website says, "PWCS is actively working to bolster teams with low participation. With this stance, more boys should try out for girls sports." What do you want to do? Will you protect the girl or protect the boy that wants to take her place?

[00:43:43] With rules like these, we do not have to worry about protecting children. Since the coach is choosing the team, it will be easy to eliminate the girl because the boy will have a biological advantage. will also not need to have separate leagues for transgender students due to their mental issues.

[00:43:59] Thank you for including boys and girls sports. I support Moms for Liberty and the Republicans with their stance against boys and girls sports or in private places. The Democrats and Governor want to allow boys and girls sports. Please vote them out. Thank you. Shannara Fountain.

[00:44:18] So you say I'm supposed to say my name and my address, right? First or no?

[00:44:37] Turn on your mic. Is the mic not on? Speak into the mic. Yep. - Can you hear me? Am I supposed to be-- - Just say your name and address. Yeah, come on. - Okay, my name is Shannara Felton. - Or you can just say it's on file, that's fine too. - Okay, my name is Shannara Felton and my address is on file. - Perfect.

[00:44:52] - Okay, and I am here today to address several concerns affecting the school bus drivers and the safety of our students. Career advancements in internal hiring. Drivers need a real pathway to move into leadership and management positions.

[00:45:09] We have experienced employees who want to grow, yet positions are being filled by people from outside the county, instead of promoting qualified employees from within. That's a slap to the face to employees who have invested their time, experience, and dedication into the school system.

[00:45:28] We don't want to be drivers forever. We want opportunities to progress. Basic resources. Our department receives necessary work equipment. Our other departments receive necessary work equipment, including steel-toed boots, while transportation employees are struggling to get basic cleaning supplies for our buses. Drivers need summer pay or a better year-round compensation structure.

[00:45:57] Employees should not have to struggle financially every summer. Bus wash. Why isn't the bus wash consistently available to drivers? We are responsible for maintaining clean buses, but yet the resources are not available veteran drivers pay why are new drivers coming in making nearly the same amount as veteran drivers who have given years of service longevity and experience should be recognized pre-k safety why were pre-k students placed on buses with kindergarten through fifth grade students without addressing the initial responsibilities placed on drivers

[00:46:36] schools dismissal information when staff and administrators give drivers incorrect information about who is authorized to receive a child that responsibility should not automatically fall on the driver we can only act on the information provided to us superintendent mcdave i am publicly requesting a meeting with you before the end of october i know you are a busy woman i am asking only for 30 to 45 minutes i will be prepared things need to change what i have shared

[00:47:12] tonight is only the tip of the iceberg for transportation we deserve resources we deserve fair pay we deserve opportunities to advance most importantly our students deserve decisions that put their safety first thank you sam philman my name is sam philman my address is on file i'm here tonight because i've made multiple attempts to schedule a meeting with dr mcdade regarding our daughter's special education services pwcs is a proper handling of procedural

[00:47:51] compliance matters even though i have followed the proper hierarchy and have been ex have extensive documented concerns i have not been offered that meeting since i've been unable to address these concerns privately i'm forced to do them publicly one of my immediate concerns involves the conduct of your director procedural support and compliance on august 14th pwcs video recorded our daughter's facilitated IEP meeting without our consent after explicitly stating video recording was not allowed, citing the wrong regulation, one that doesn't even exist. PWCS then recorded the meeting and failed to place that recording in her educational record. No one informed us of the recording until PWCS submitted

[00:48:30] that video to the VDOE in response to one of our many state complaints, offering no explanation. The same school began video recording another family's IEP meeting just days later. We raised this concern with the director and with the Associate Superintendent of Special Education. We were told that by this director that she did research and she would give us a phone call. During that call, which we audio recorded, she apparently was prepared for it, but she was unable to tell us how many copies of the video there are, where they're stored, who's already accessed them, who has access still to them, why a copy is stored on the OneDrive, why the video was emailed to the state on a platform

[00:49:08] that's not secure, why we were never notified of the recording, and why it was not placed in our daughter's educational records. We still don't have answers to those questions. The director then stated that she did not intend to contact any of the families who may have been affected by this incorrect practice.

[00:49:23] I was, however, encouraged to talk to members of the neighborhood, something she tried to take back when I informed her that I worked at that school as a special education teacher the year prior. During this call, she admitted that she did not know that this was against PWCS policy. She instead claimed that it was common practice at her previous district, which we learned was Fairfax County.

[00:49:42] Fairfax County maintains a very strict no-video-recording policy. She's refused our formal request to destroy the video despite the privacy and security concerns we raised and has not answered either of our follow-up emails from September 8th or 22nd. She's repeatedly identified in multiple state complaint responses that the principal of my daughter's school is a Virginia-licensed speech-language pathologist, but according to the Virginia Department of Health Professions license lookup, that license expired 13 years ago.

[00:50:10] VDOE has issued extensive corrective action and states that PWCS remains out of compliance with some of the corrective action. They've ordered additional corrective action to remedy PWCS's failures, including finding PWCS non-compliant with their handling of all of my FERPA requests. This requires oversight beyond the department whose conduct is at issue, as they are repeatedly failing us.

[00:50:31] I would like a meeting with you still, Dr. McDade, as this is just a small fraction of the concerns that I have. I also would like to update you on my conversations that I've had with Delegate Siebel, as she is now... - Thank you, Ms. Philbin. - Thank you, Rich Philbin.

[00:50:54] - Name's Rich Philbin, my address is on file. So I really don't believe in any of this. I think this is really just a show. I'm really grateful for all the citizens that show up here and give their opinion, but I don't think any of this is actually taken to heart and any sort of accountability would ever be really destroyed out.

[00:51:12] I'm here because my wife, the five feet of fury that just walked away, kind of pulled me into this and I'm dedicated to that. Over the past 10 years with her, I've seen her give everything into teaching. I've seen her put a lot of money into her classroom. I've seen her care a lot about the students and go above and beyond.

[00:51:30] So I get all those complaints. I listen to it. I married a yapper, that's what she does, and I just absorb it. And really, it stinks hearing it from her that these problems continue to exist, and it hurts even more when it affects my daughter, and I see it happen.

[00:51:46] And when we have these issues, and they grow, and they grow, and they grow, it comes up to this level, and we really can't handle it, we can't take care of it because it's too big of an issue, but we don't go down to the bottom line, which is the educator themselves. When's the last time we've heard of an educator being fired outside of touching a student in any way?

[00:52:03] And it doesn't happen, it just doesn't. The problems get moved. You have bad teachers, bad support personnel, special educators, speech therapists don't do their job, backed up minutes, backed up minutes, it gets up high enough to the county for you guys to take care of it, and you can't do it.

[00:52:19] You can't cover down, you can't make this work, but we don't do anything about it. It continues to exist, problems get moved, and at the ground level, is that person being taken care of? I'll tell you what, the person who failed my daughter is at another school, still working, no issues.

[00:52:36] You see it happen a lot. Nothing happened, no reprimand, no pay docking, nothing, no, hey, you need to take some administrative leave, think about the student you failed, that doesn't happen. I don't know why we don't start empowering principals, educators at lower levels to take care of these problems, because they keep happening.

[00:52:55] As an active duty military member, and I know some other people have served, we know that we work for the government, we work with federal tax dollars, but we're also held accountable. We are counseled quarterly, yearly.

[00:53:10] You have evaluations that are done. Does that happen here, when tax dollars are put down to teachers and to educators, and when they don't perform? What is the checks and balance at the baseline level? I feel like if we can establish that, we'd probably solve a lot of issues.

[00:53:31] I really have nothing else to say. So I told my wife I am going to use the time and I want to talk about the Eagles offensive line and how I really feel they need to fix it. It's a problem. We just traded Cam Juergens, that's good.

[00:53:49] Maybe, maybe next week. Thank you. - Thank you. Yordi Lopez. And then after Yordi, the next five will be Jamal Burgess Walters, Riley O'Casey, Kimberly Melman Orozco, Adriana Ko, and Michael Kuludeles.

[00:54:11] Okay, Yordi Lopez. - Hello, good evening. I'm George López. My address is on file. Buenas tardes, miembros de Junta Escolar y presidente de Junta Escolar, Dr. Mike Deir. Antes de comenzar, me gustaría decirles un feliz mes de herencia hispana a todas las personas que nos están viendo y nos están celebrando. Que Dios los bendiga. Quiero recordarles que nunca debemos tener miedo a levantar nuestras banderas y trabajar duro siempre para lograr nuestras metas en la vida.

[00:54:32] Mi nombre es Jordi, empleado para PWCS. Estoy acá hoy para hablar por las personas que tienen miedo a hablar y que también merecen ser escuchadas. I remember sitting in a room while my classmates and teachers didn't speak the same language that I was afraid.

[00:54:50] But I wanted to go ahead. Why? Because I knew that I was the only person in my family that could go ahead. I also knew that if I didn't defend my own needs, nobody would come to give me the support that I needed. Con los años enfrenté muchos desafíos, incluyendo comentarios racistes y personas que se volaron de mi hogar, de mi acento y de donde venía.

[00:55:09] Y al igual que esas experiencias, hay muchos otros desafíos que nuestros estudiantes pasan todos los días. Hoy tengo la oportunidad para trabajar para PIDO UCS y ayudar a estos estudiantes. Cuando entro a un salón, que puede ser alrededor de 10 a 14 salones por día, no por dos días, por día, los estudiantes a veces me miro reflejado ahí cuando yo estaba pequeño.

[00:55:30] I know that we feel that we need help and not know where to go. I understand that learning a new language is not only about learning a new vocabulary, but also about learning a new language or learning a new language. It is also about learning a new language. It is also about having questions, making errors, being creative, and feeling that one belongs to the school.

[00:55:46] Because that means investing in our students means investing in the people who support them all day. Also, the 21 of April I talked about the Pre-K about the importance of Pre-K and how can they benefit the students who are learning a new idioma and adapt to a new system.

[00:56:03] Today I want to show you my appreciation because Elevate 2030 PWCS recognizes the importance of learning from a early age, including the goal of implementing pre-escolar universal for the year 2030. I hope with all my heart that this program is complete and well financed.

[00:56:20] This opportunity of education will change the lives of the students if it is correctly financed. but the 21 of April I also came to talk about the \$31 million that they wanted to take away from our schools. These \$31 million that we could have taken away from the databases were going to affect our workers too.

[00:56:39] Please, I ask our leaders to feel with our students and that you also see how they work, because they deserve all the support that we can give, and a language barrier should not be impeded. Lo hemos visto con alcaldes como Sarah Mandami, que él se llega a sentar con los estudiantes.

[00:57:00] So les pido a ustedes, por favor, que sigamos poniendo dinero en las escuelas, especialmente donde lo ocupamos. Muchas gracias. Thank you. Jamal Burgess Walters.

[00:57:21] Is it on? Can you hear me? We're ready? The mic. Yep. Okay, what do I need to say? To like introduce myself? Oh, wow, okay.

[00:57:39] Anyways, Dr. McDade, you recommended Ms. Brooks here for termination based off of a flawed and faulty investigation. That principal said that them parents came in there stating that \$5,000 was in that woman's purse and them drivers took some money out of there.

[00:57:55] Why didn't the principal collect a written statement from them parents stating that this ever happened? You got video footage in the school, can't pull it out. You don't got no kind of information stating that them parents said any of that stuff ever happened. But the principal pushes it on to risk management as if something happened.

[00:58:14] Now, I'm looking at the bus video footage. I'm seeing everything that's happening. No indication that them women took anything out of that woman's purse. They was looking for an ID. They did see some money in there, but they did not find ID. Only thing that them women did wrong is that they did not call it in.

[00:58:31] That's it. But all of a sudden, that was grounds to terminate them. Everybody else on this board just follows suit like little puppets. Unacceptable. I'm 17 years old still in school. I'm reading this paperwork. This is ridiculous. Unacceptable.

[00:58:46] But anyways, going back to the principal, what you gonna do with her? Unprofessional conduct on the principal's behalf. She says she's seen that video footage of that bus driver and the attendant. The attendant gets off the bus and picks up the wallet or picks up the purse and brings it on the bus and the bus pulls off.

[00:59:02] She says she was in immediate contact with risk management. If you supposed to be looking for the purse and identifying where it went off, The first person that you should have been contacting was transportation. Why you ain't call them? Then you do call them after you get in touch with risk management, telling them some faulty story.

[00:59:21] Once the driver brings the person back to you, she explains to you what happened, and you're still pushing along as if these drivers did something wrong. But so that you don't look like... No. A week later is when she submits the stuff off to risk management, stating that this incident happened.

[00:59:36] You talked to the coordinator of transportation, East Potomac, didn't tell her anything. Mind you, you're saying that the parents said the money was missing all in the same day. Why you didn't tell the coordinator that money was missing? Why you ain't say that? I'm going to tell you why she didn't say that.

[00:59:53] Because it never happened. But you all sitting up here reading the paperwork as if something happened based off of an investigation by an investigator probably hired by him, another incompetent individual. All of them incompetent. It's crazy how I'm 17 years old and I can look at this and see that this is ridiculous.

[01:00:11] Only thing that them women did wrong is that they did not call it in. That's a simple, hey, next time do this, that, and the third. Especially when you all don't got no policy governing what they should have did. It's no procedures for none of that. Ridiculous. This right here just grounds for a little warning or something, especially when they dedicated 22 and 21 years.

[01:00:31] But I guess that was all just for nothing. Ridiculous. Have a good one. Riley O'Casey. Good evening, Dr. Lateef, board members, Dr. McDade.

[01:00:48] My name is Riley O'Casey, and my address is on file. As a veteran educator in this county, I understand accountability. Every educator understands accountability, meaningful assessments, and meaningful data analysis.

[01:01:05] We all want our students to succeed, but no one is talking about what is being lost in the pursuit of these goals. When the focus becomes whether a learning target is written on the board in exactly the right manner rather than the meaningful learning, that meaningful learning is happening in the room, we must ask ourselves, are we measuring what matters most?

[01:01:31] Many teachers in Prince William County schools increasingly feel that their professional judgment is being replaced by compliance, what must be posted, what must be documented, how instruction must look, and how success will be measured. Don't forget to differentiate, innovate, build relationships, address individual student needs and produce higher test scores.

[01:01:55] This division cannot ask educators to be creative professionals while simultaneously removing their professional autonomy. It's not working. You cannot continue to demand higher scores without acknowledging the reality inside our classrooms.

[01:02:13] Children are not data points. They arrive with different abilities, experiences, needs, and challenges. And educators work every day to meet their needs and move them forward. That work cannot and will not always be captured by a number.

[01:02:31] Our time and energy must be spent designing engaging lessons, providing meaningful feedback, and connecting with our students. It should not be spent with administrators feeling the pressure from the division to to check off boxes and being told your best is not enough.

[01:02:50] I am asking our division leadership to trust the professionals you hired. Hold us to high standards, but give us the room to meet those standards with professional judgment. Use data, but do not allow data to become more important than the children it represents.

[01:03:10] Teacher wellbeing and student success are not competing priorities, they are connected. We must have a system in which exceptional teachers have the trust, time, and autonomy to teach.

[01:03:25] Our students deserve it, and so do their teachers. Thank you. - Kimberly Melman-Orozco.

[01:03:42] - My name is Dr. Kimberly Melman-Orozco. My address is on file. First, I do wanna give a heartfelt thank you to all the whistleblower teachers and staff members who have reached out to me. I think Attorney Wade Anderson, you know of three of them so far.

[01:03:58] The rest of them will be released in due time. For all the other teachers that have heard or seen something illegal being committed by Prince William County staff, I encourage you to reach out to me. If you don't feel comfortable reaching out via email, you can write at PO Box 10, Gainesville, Virginia, 20156.

[01:04:20] With that being said, I'm sure that you've seen the recent announcement from the Department of Justice in the US Department of Education about their plans and looking into some of the things that are happening within schools and school choice.

[01:04:37] If I were you all, I would be very, very worried right now. You all know that you are engaging in systemic violations to special education law and civil rights violations against kids in this county.

[01:04:52] You know what is happening. You know that multiple of your administrators have engaged in perjury, you know that you're concealing it. One of the things for any teacher that's thinking about whether they wanna be a whistleblower, I wanna give another little announcement.

[01:05:09] VDOE actually just released a letter of findings encouraging parents to bring evidence of falsification of records to the police. I went to the magistrate in Prince William County. He said it's a felony. You falsify records, it could be a felony.

[01:05:27] And I would be very worried. And Dr. Lateef, congratulations. This is your last year on this school board. You will be voted out of office next year. I guarantee it.

[01:05:43] You wanna know how? You have accomplished something that is an amazing feat. You, a Democrat that attempted to run for Lieutenant Governor, have effectively pushed left of left liberals to vote for whomever your Republican challenger is.

[01:06:00] tens of thousands of dollars being raised. They will be knocking on doors. You're not even running for reelection for a year. They've already started. It doesn't matter who runs against you. You've harmed so many kids. You've hurt so many people that liberal Democrats will be voting Republican for the first time in their life.

[01:06:21] And I encourage every parent, every one of these staff members that's looking for more money, they are wasting it on themselves instead of paying you a fair wage, instead of taking care of kids, vote each and every one of you out of office, but I guarantee, Dr. Lateef, you will be the first to go.

[01:06:40] And what you have done to kids will be exposed. - Adrienne Koh.

[01:06:58] - My name is Adriana Koh. My address is on file. I'm a parent of a fourth grade student at Occoquan Elementary School, and it is a fantastic school. I wanna be upfront with that. However, I am here tonight to ask for greater transparency urgency regarding the current construction going on when the project began we were told to expect approximately 18 months of construction that has now stretched

into year three potentially looking at year four right now for my family and all Occoquan elementary families this is not a timeline

[01:07:33] that's just on paper my fourth grader has not had a playground at her school since she was in first grade and that is three years of not having a playground at school when we all know that time was spent on the playground not only helps kids decompress and unwind it also helps them focus more in the classroom i understand that large construction projects encounter unexpected problems i'm a project manager i face unexpected delays all the time in my line of work and i'm not asking that the school district pretend that delays never happen what i am asking for is more

[01:08:11] transparency around what's causing the delays what the current timeline actually is and what milestones families can reasonably expect to see and when they can expect to see them i also ask that we make sure that even though the building is complete and the ribbon cutting ceremony was held that this remains a priority and remains high up on the priority list um currently the old building has not been demolished i understand that that takes time as well until the building is demolished they cannot put in the fields they cannot put in the playgrounds

[01:08:47] and that leaves our third to fifth graders playing on sidewalks and that is not really where we would like to see them playing um i believe that even though the building itself is complete students and teachers all deserve to know when they can expect the entire campus to be truly finished and again i want to stress that playgrounds are not just an extracurricular amenity they are part of the learning environment and physical activities supports attention executive function and readiness to learn while outdoor and appropriately challenging play gives

[01:09:22] children opportunities to practice problem solving persistence decision making and social skills a climbing wall isn't just fun to do it gives a child a chance to assess a challenge decide whether and how to attempt it persist when it's difficult and experience the satisfaction of mastering it none of that can be accomplished playing with a ball on a sidewalk please i urge you to advocate for this project with the urgency it deserves provide families with clear and honest updates about the remaining timeline and make completing those playgrounds a priority thank you

[01:09:56] okay michael caloudelis and after that the next five will be janelle anderson jessica young jeff lofgren rena staff and angie traertolo tola good evening i'm seeing a lot of familiar faces Good evening, Chair Lateef, board members, and Superintendent McDade.

[01:10:19] My name is Michael Kaloudelis, and my address is on file. I'm here today on behalf of FIRST Robotics Competition Team 2068, the Metal Jackets, to urge you all to support and adopt the legislative priorities that will be presented by Mr. Counsel.

[01:10:35] These priorities are about one thing, making sure students have the resources they need, not just to attend school, but to thrive and succeed, and to create a thriving future for themselves. I especially want to recognize and thank the school board for its continued support of our universal free school meals.

[01:10:52] We believe that this is an issue that deserves continued advocacy at both the local and the state level. In the adopted and signed Virginia state budget, approximately \$30 million has been provided to reduce the cost of school meals. We appreciate this investment by the Commonwealth, but we believe that we should go further.

[01:11:11] we want to see that investment increase and we want to see that same commitment expanded into school lunch so that more students can have reliable access to nutritious meals throughout the school day. When students are fed they are better positioned to be in school. When students are more consistently in school students are able to succeed academically and when students have their needs met they're better able to participate in the activities that make school meaningful to them whether that's theater, athletics, music, or of course robotics. The Metal Jackets want to continue to support students in that process, but we cannot do that alone. We

[01:11:49] need our school division, our local leaders, and our state government working together to remove barriers that prevent students from succeeding. We also hope this board will consider supporting the bills and legislative initiatives that the Metal Jackets will be bringing up in the General Assembly this session, affecting students, STEM education, and our schools. We look forward to working with you all and our legislators to advance the policies that give students more room to succeed. So tonight, I ask this board to support the legislative priorities that will be presented, particularly those that strengthen access to school meals and CTE pathways and

[01:12:26] the continued expansion of universal free meals. Thank you for your leadership on this issue. Thank you for continuing to put students first in this issue, and thank you for giving us the opportunity to advocate for our schools and our community. I also invite all of you to our first lego league manassas qualifier on the 14th and the 15th i will send the clerk's office a email so i appreciate that you guys have a great night thank you janelle anderson hello my name is janelle

[01:13:02] anderson i live in the occoquan district and my address is on file i spoke to you on september 2nd about how the student bathrooms at colgan high school are often locked during the school day Since then, I met face to face with Mr. Litts, Colgan's principal, but I still cannot get an answer to a very simple question.

[01:13:24] The question is, what bathrooms at Colgan High School are unlocked during class changes? The school just doesn't answer. Colgan claims that the Commons A bathroom is always open before school, but my daughter has sometimes found the bathroom locked in the morning and there's nowhere else to go.

[01:13:43] Other times, the line for the Commons A bathroom is so long that it is practically inaccessible. And my daughter doesn't want to risk being tardy to class, especially since Colgan recently sent out an email threatening to revoke student parking privileges or suspend students from athletic teams for excessive tardies.

[01:14:04] But how many tardies is excessive? The email does not say. After school last week, the line for the Commons A bathroom was so long that my daughter came home from school needing to pee badly. I am so lucky that I picked up my daughter by car.

[01:14:20] This situation must be so much harder for students who have long bus rides home after school. Yesterday, it was suggested to me, not by Colgan High School, but it was suggested to me that perhaps my daughter just needs to be more assertive, that she should interrupt her teacher and just insist on leaving.

[01:14:39] But a student's assertiveness should not be part of the school system's plan for providing teenagers access to toilets. Colgan High School has a bad system, a humiliating system. Students deserve privacy and dignity around basic body functions.

[01:14:56] Please establish a clear standard for timely restroom access throughout the school day, including before school, during class changes, during classes, and after school. The system should work for the quiet student who is too shy to speak up, and the system should also work for assertive students alike.

[01:15:19] Please help me fix this bad system. Thank you. - Jessica Young.

[01:15:37] - Good evening, my name is Jessica Young. My address is on file. I speak at these meetings to bring awareness and meaningful change for students with special rights to share so parents know they aren't alone. Some say our special education experience seems like a reality show.

[01:15:54] I respond with it's more like a feeling of waiting for the reveal on Punk'd. Since we are in a new school year, a new season has begun, and here is episode three. Yes, it has gotten worse. Last week, we asked the IEP team to reconsider the approval of a communication partner for our student.

[01:16:10] It was denied again. I am going to start a petition for the policy to change so that all the students get the same level of support for their chosen communication method, regardless of any other factor. So, at the meeting, we requested private placement. Ultimately, a higher cost to the district over the price tag to adhere to IDEA and ADA, and just hire an appropriate staff member.

[01:16:32] This week, our student without the proper communication support for ASL was suspended for three days for an incident that took place in his classroom without his one-on-one aid there or a replacement while she was at lunch. Staff members sat incorrectly with their backs to students who can be unpredictable and did not support our son in a task one-to-one.

[01:16:51] We were told that our appeal to the principal based on the fact that the incident occurred due to improper staffing, training, and support was denied because the suspension is a consequence aligned with the PWCS disciplinary guidelines for general education students, not special needs.

[01:17:07] I'm going to go out on a limb when I say that there are many special rights students that have no idea what that code of conduct means or says, which is why our son did not even sign it this year, at the beginning of the year. The same logic applies to him not getting a learner's permit to drive, even though he's old enough, or why he will not get a traditional diploma.

[01:17:25] Discretion should be allowed for our students with special rights, especially when it is the system that was at fault. It wasn't prevented by the staff, and our student was kicked out for three days and not provided any instructional materials for those three days. The only change that is being made before he goes back into the classroom isn't in his IEP, no behavior evaluations suggested, goals to be mastered, or related services added.

[01:17:48] They are correcting the staffing issue and having someone fill his one-on-one aid position while she's on break. This shouldn't have happened, and it should not be at the expense of my student. This is where you all come in and actually make a difference. You can vote for the voiceless and their parents.

[01:18:03] We need the ability to have an exception to the code of conduct for students with special needs, not adhering them to the standards of gen ed kids when they aren't. And if it exists already, we need an explanation as to why it's not being used. Policy change is required. My student being home for three days

actually has a higher chance of reinforcing the behavior or disrupting his routine and adjustment to high school.

[01:18:25] Our son, for the first time in his life, is communicating unprompted, purposefully, and independently. His expressive communication is probably more important to support him than is receptive. It breaks my heart to hear that he doesn't socialize with the other students because there is no one there to support him. Thank you, Ms. Young.

[01:18:42] Jeff Lofgren.

[01:18:52] Chairman Lateef, board members, Dr. McDade. My name is Jeff Lofgren. My address is on file with the clerk. Thank you for hearing me tonight. When someone comes into a public forum like this and spews hate, my first instinct is to ignore it. Don't give it oxygen. Don't give attention to people who say cruel and dehumanizing things just to provoke a reaction but then i think about the kids who are listening at home i think about the muslim teen who hears someone suggest that people like them are somehow responsible for terrorism i think about the gay children or the trans student who hears an adult stand at this microphone and call people like them crazy or mentally ill and i wonder what our silence sounds

[01:19:31] like to them because silence can sound an awful lot like agreement so i don't want to be silent anymore. To every Muslim kid listening, you are not responsible for the hatred or violence of strangers. You belong here. To every gay kid and every trans kid listening, there is nothing about who you are that makes you less deserving of dignity, respect, safety, or love. You belong here. And to every kid who has ever heard an adult use this room to make them feel ashamed, afraid, or unwanted, please hear something louder tonight. We see you, we care about you,

[01:20:08] and you are part of this community there will always be willing people willing to stand at a microphone and tear someone else down we can't always stop them from speaking but we can make damn sure they are never the only voices our children hear hate does not get the last word our kids do thank you thank you rena staff hello i'm rena staff my information is on file with

[01:20:44] the court um good evening dr mcdade dr latif and the rest of the board i didn't receive the email saying I was approved for tonight since I spoke last week so I don't have written remarks but I will just give you my ideas that I was going to talk about anyway last week I attended the specialty programs fair with my eighth grader as we were looking into all the wonderful high schools and all the different opportunities and I wanted to spotlight that because I know not everyone reads all of the emails because if your school is really good about communication you get about three emails a day and then a couple from the board and a couple from the superintendent it's great I read many of

[01:21:21] them but I knew about this specialty fair because I read it all and it was in one of my mom chats so I did want to mention that many of the high schools in the area are having their specialty fairs where you can go our specialty program nights and that is something that many many students would benefit from many of them are the CTE programs or some of the programs that are only for 11th and 12th grade and those are awesome like the culinary arts at Patriot you can do that as well as doing another specialty because it's a transport program I learned all about transport versus transfer programs there's so much

[01:21:58] information that was immensely helpful on that career night so I want to thank everyone that was involved in getting that together and everyone that was presenting especially all the teachers and the

students the students gave some great feedback for my son to hear what the program was about what their options were so I wanted to say thank you to everyone who was involved with that and if anyone is listening that wasn't able to go to that go check out the high schools and middle schools depending on the age of your kids and see what is available because there are so many things in addition to AP and IB and

[01:22:35] and other great scholastic opportunities. There's many of the skills, there's welding, there was culinary, there was cosmetology, there were so many things that weren't available back in the stone age when I was in high school and you just went to wherever you were zoned.

[01:22:52] So kudos to Prince William County and thank you for hosting such a great event. - Angie Trey-Rutola.

[01:23:10] - Good evening, Dr. McDade and members of the school board. My name is Angie Trey-Rutola and I teach economics and personal finance Osborne Park High School. Tonight, I'm asking you to consider one thing, re-designating Key Club as a school-sponsored club. As someone who participated in Key Club at Unity Reed High School as a student and benefited tremendously from it, I never imagined I would hesitate to sponsor it as a teacher. Yet, when students have been approaching me for the last two years about helping restart the Key Club chapter at Osborne Park, I found myself reluctant, not because I don't believe in its mission, but because of the restrictions that come with its current designation as an equal Access Club. The challenge is that Key Club is fundamentally a service organization. Its purpose

[01:23:49] is not simply to meet once a month. Its purpose is to organize volunteer projects, conduct drives like food drives for Thanksgiving, like Operation Turkey, support charitable causes, collect donations, and coordinate with community partners and develop student leaders. Yet under its current designation, students who want to start a Key Club chapter face significant limitations that so many other PWCS alumni did not when participating in this club. And this isn't just a thing at OP, this is literally like any key club that would be chartered from the understanding that I've gotten talking with the students who've been asking around because they are so determined to get this restarted. But we want to make sure that they get to do it proudly and say that

[01:24:28] whatever they're going to do at OP, they get to say, I'm doing this on behalf of key club. I'm doing this for key club. Because right now, what's going to happen is they have to find a curriculum-based club to be able to do the things like collect food to help run the prom dress shop that the very beloved and legendary teacher, Leanne Beardsley, would run.

[01:24:55] She was at OP for 34 years, and she was the last key club sponsor that was able to pull all of these things together before the changes happened, and we had to make it so that clubs that were not designated as curriculum-based could no longer collect money at school, and that created some significant issues.

[01:25:12] What confuses me is we now have a student voice committee at every high school, and we offer leadership one, two, and three across the county. The course description on the PWCS course catalog reads, "Leadership development one, two, and three." Students will learn about aspects of leadership by looking at historical and modern examples.

[01:25:28] Planning and implementing school activities will allow students the practical application of leadership theory. Through the practice of planning, coordinating, and implementing school-wide activities, Students will be exposed to a wide variety of leadership experiences. Each student enrolled in

the course is assigned a position in which they are responsible for specific tasks that support the student body.

[01:25:48] I know personally how important those opportunities can be. As an IB diploma student, I relied on Key Club to help me complete the community service requirements that were part of my educational experience. Many of our students today are still seeking those same opportunities. My request tonight is simple. Please revisit the decision to classify Key Club as an equal access club and explore whether it can once again and be recognized as a school-sponsored club.

[01:26:09] This is not about restricting access, it's about allowing a proven student service organization to fully serve our students and our community. Thank you for your time and consideration. - Hannah Ansari.

[01:26:32] - You said my name, right? Okay, sorry, sorry, okay, sorry. I thank you to the board for letting me come back to speak again. I'm three for three for meetings so far this year, so Nintendo McDade, always a pleasure. My address is on file. I wanted to talk about decorum and appropriateness of topics this time around. Now when Dr. Lateef and Chairwoman Jefferson of the supervisors meeting say decorum, I'm imagining that we're not allowed to come up here and have an expletive-laden rant.

[01:26:54] Another thing that is considered whether or not it is germane to the topics at hand. With a supervisor's meeting, I feel like germane can really encompass almost anything. But with school board meetings, it should really be related to the school or education or something like that. But it isn't always. At the last meeting, we were subjected to a racist rant under the guise of patriotism. I don't think that is germane to the topics at hand.

[01:27:11] On an earlier draft of this speech, I was going to concede that patriotism and racism are intertwined. Almost to be an American is to be racist. We wouldn't be in our current political predicament if not for rampant racism. that it's too great a concession to make. When you're dressed from head to tone in an outfit that says I'm racist, ask me how. I'm not surprised when you say something really racist, but I have to believe that everyone isn't rabidly racist.

[01:27:31] And while that First Amendment right protects one's right to free speech, it doesn't make you free from the consequences of that speech. I hate to think of the students and community members listening at home, listening to what can only be described as an unhinged racist rant and not, shoot, and not having someone say they disagree.

[01:27:47] We shouldn't subject the students in this community to one of the most diverse school districts in the country to an unhinged racist rant. While the board sat here non-pulsed at the time, what does that say to the targeted group? That you're not welcome, that you're not wanted. By staying silent in the face of bigotry, you're condoning it. Silence is complicity, as it is in the genocide going on in the Middle East now.

[01:28:06] I think the board should not platform racism and subject anyone to racist rants, no matter how patriotic they may seem. It is a privilege, not a right, to exercise your right to free speech here, and if people can't be civilized, they shouldn't be allowed to speak. If you do not act accordingly, as you seem never to do based on the parade of parents that come here asking for help every week.

[01:28:22] It will force some of us to come here and highlight the problems with racism week after week after week. And you know I have nothing better to do with my time. Thank you. - Troy Harris. And then our last one will be Robin Norris.

[01:28:51] - Good evening, school board. My address is on file with the office. I am here today to talk to you about an incident that happened on August 22nd of 2026. my child attended Osborne Park High School at an open run and workout.

[01:29:11] During that visit, my son was injured. He was injured by not a student of the school. He was injured by an outside adult, not a student of the school that was invited by the coach to participate in open play against these children.

[01:29:30] I asked the school board to take, I asked the deputy superintendent to take a look at this. I raised it through the administration of the school. Lisa Marie Kane came back to me and said, she acknowledges that the coach invited adults to compete against these students.

[01:29:48] The deputy superintendent also acknowledged it that adults came to compete against these students. However, he downplayed it as being common practice. I asked the school board, since when is it common practice for a coach to invite adult non-students to participate in active play against our school children?

[01:30:10] Prince William County policy 648 regulation, 648-2, section V, provision A and E govern out of season rules that these children are supposed, the coach is supposed to abide by. However, the coach was granted somehow autonomy over those regulations to oversee and override Prince William County's regulations to override VHSL mandates of the bona fide student rule, which states that their only participation should be a bona fide student of the school that is in good standings.

[01:30:46] Ms. Zargapur, you are aware that this has been going on. I have sent multiple emails out. However, I cannot get through to the VHSL because I am not able to, as a parent, to raise issues with there. So I raise to the principals of every school in your district, I raise this tip to them, that the coach has been running outside plays, preparing for this season, and teaching plays for the upcoming season, And organized basketball to compete against the upcoming season schools, every one of them in your district.

[01:31:26] So I encourage every school in your district principal to look into the videotape of August 22, 2026 that will show that. I asked for the video and has been denied. This video shows the injury that happens to my child.

[01:31:42] It shows the organized basketball where the assistant coach, that is the father of the coach, told these children, you need to learn these plays because I am not going to keep teaching them to you. Thank you, Mr. Harris. Thank you. Robin Norris. Good evening, and thank you for allowing me to speak.

[01:32:10] My name is Dr. Robin Norris, and my address is on file. I want to tell you a story about three generations of a family. 85 years ago, a little boy entered kindergarten. He was held back for several years and was called dumb and stupid, and eventually left school without graduating from high school.

[01:32:29] 46 years ago, his daughter entered kindergarten, and she made it through graduate school, but school was a struggle. She was told her difficulties were because she was a product of divorce and a latchkey kid. 11 years ago, his first granddaughter entered kindergarten.

[01:32:46] She was identified as gifted, and her struggles were attributed to being bored or just not challenged enough. Eight years ago, his second granddaughter entered kindergarten, and she was described as smart and kind, but her struggles were attributed to a little bit of a stutter.

[01:33:03] Four people, three generations, four different educational stories, and yet they shared something no one understood until three years ago. Dyslexia. More specifically, difficulties with decoding and phonological awareness.

[01:33:19] The problem wasn't intelligence, motivation, parenting, or boredom. The adults were trying to explain what they were seeing but without the right information those Explanations became stories about the child instead of explanations about the child's learning needs and that's why early Identification matters when we don't understand why a child is struggling we can unintentionally tell them You're not trying hard enough. You're bored You just need to read some more often or a child may become good at compensating that nobody realizes how hard they are working I'm grateful to be part of changing that story.

[01:33:55] I hope that if there are great-grandchildren entering kindergarten someday, their experience will be different. There has already been enough unnecessary pain in this family's educational history. We can do better for the next generation. I will be presenting at the VCU Dyslexia Symposium on October 24th.

[01:34:14] I'll also be at the International Dyslexia Association Conference in Vegas presenting november's november's 12th through 14th and lastly i hope to attend the black literacy conference in omaha march 17th through 20th these opportunities represent my ongoing commitment to learning educating and elevating how we understand children who learn differently because sometimes changing a child's future begins with changing the story we tell about why they are struggling so we can build the bridge for them to thrive thank you thank you that concludes citizen comment time

[01:34:53] for this evening we're moving on to 1501 legislative priorities dr mcdade thank you mr chairman to share information on our 2027 legislative priorities i welcome our director of communications diana galata and legislative lobbyist jim council and they will be here to share some information and take any questions that you have good evening chairman lateef school board members dr mcdade and community members i'm here this evening with our lobbyist mr jim council to provide a brief

[01:35:31] update on the 2027 prince william county public schools legislative priorities with the exception of three priorities this document is is the exact same as last year's document we've added one priority in the finance area related to the modifications of the local composite index or lci formula secondly we've added a priority to preserve local authority over instructional technology and finally we have added a priority that addresses the school accountability framework

[01:36:08] these updates are on pages six through eight in the document before we entertain any questions i want to remind everybody that this is mr council's last year he's retiring at the end of the year after being with the district he says at least 15 years he doesn't remember how long exactly but he's been our lobbyist for 15 years so we're very sad that he's going to be gone after this legislative session so we'll be making some plans um without him after this legislative session but we are here to address any questions that you may have about the legislative priorities document

[01:36:46] well thank you let me be the first to say um thank you mr counsel um i always look forward to you attending our meetings um it's always a pleasure to hear from you and hear what's happening in richmond so before we sort of get into the sort of nitty-gritty of this if there are any nitty-gritty questions um first thank you and and and we're grateful to have have you back for one last round well i look forward to it mr chairman and board members and dr mcdade uh it's been a

[01:37:22] good run it really has i was trying to think how many years it's actually been on the drive up it's at least 15 and i can think through uh a number of different board members at least two superintendents and four board chairmen so it's been a while well i like to think of instead of years then dollars you've gotten us over the last 15 years so we really appreciate it because the work you do down and there always ends up with getting us the dollars we need and the dollars we need to be able to do the things we're doing here, and you will be missed.

[01:37:56] So I do wanna say that before we get started, but let's dive into it, Mr. Counsel. - Thank you, I often thought I should have been on commission, but. - Well, you can come back next year, we can talk about that, I'll amend your contract, I'm the chairman, but in reality, so the thing I'm most worried about is the LCI.

[01:38:18] - What are the chances that the legislature and the governor will change the LCI calculation this year? - I think we have some real good news for you. I'm glad you opened with that question because there's a joint committee to study school funding and they are expected within a week to issue an RFP for consultants to do a elaborate complete study on school funding, so.

[01:38:45] - And that study could take two, three, four years? - We would hope so, yes, sir. So I think we're really good on short-term, anyone manipulating the LCI. - So last year, the LCI recalculation was part of the broader movement by the State Senate to remove the data center sales tax.

[01:39:10] That was all together in one bill. Do you see that coming back up? Do you see them changing the LCI, even if the committee is studying school funding? Do you think that Senator Lucas and all of them are looking to do that?

[01:39:26] I mean- - I think I could only say that if there were any change at all, that would be the only one, the one that was previously proposed to remove the data center property from it. I can't imagine any other- - Well, no, they wanted to add it to the LCI calculation.

[01:39:44] Remember last year? - Right. - Yeah, so do you think they would try to do that again this year? - I think with the big study coming up, they would not. - Okay, all right, well, very good. That's certainly good news for us, at least for this next 12 months.

[01:40:01] Anytime they're in session, I worry, but let's, questions for the other board members. Anybody else have any thoughts, concerns? You will have this document to look at for the next couple of weeks. We'll come back and vote on it in two weeks.

[01:40:17] Jim Council is always available for questions. And will you be back in two weeks, Jim, or we'll probably just do this without you the next time? - I will be definitely back next Tuesday. - For the dinner. - Oh yes, right, we have a dinner.

[01:40:33] Do we have a presentation for that? I did get an email on that today. - Yes, you have talking points for that? - No, but do we have a presentation? The supervisors are asking. - No. - Okay. - And Ana and I spoke to them today. - Got it, okay, very good. Okay, and with that being said, Mr. Counsel, always a pleasure to see you.

[01:40:53] and grateful that at least I'll have you here back for one or two more meetings. No one says Mr. Chairman better than you do. - Oh, thank you very much. And I would encourage all of you to come to the Legislative Visit Day in January this year.

[01:41:08] - Oh, very good. Thank you, Mr. Counselor. - Love to see you there. Thank you. - All right. Moving on, student representative time. We now have, tonight, we welcome Marley Smith from Freedom High School, senior. And you may have the floor, Ms. Marley Smith.

[01:41:26] - Hello, everyone. I hope you had a great Wednesday so far. To start off, I would like to acknowledge School Board Chairman, Dr. Lateef, the members of the Prince William County School Board and Superintendent of Schools, Dr. McDayton. In case you forgot, my name is Marley Smith and I'm a senior at Freedom High School.

[01:41:44] We are already in the seventh week of school, which means we are close to finishing the first quarter. It almost feels like winter break is right around the corner, but wait, let me not get too ahead of myself. We have so many events happening in the month of October. Students, we have no school on Monday, October 12th.

[01:42:02] Take this time to get rest and work done. Underclassmen, PSATs are coming up next week on October 14th. Get at least eight hours of sleep night before. Make sure the blue book is downloaded on your computer.

[01:42:17] Bring your computer fully charged and grab a water bottle just in case. Try your best, you got this. Students, the calendar survey is now open. You have until October 16th to make sure your voice counts on the school calendar in the future.

[01:42:34] It's homecoming season. From pep rallies to spirit weeks, this is a time to participate and show your school's spirit. Yesterday, the student leadership workshop took place. Student voice committees from the entire county, middle and high school attended.

[01:42:49] We started off with icebreakers, reviewed our school's Gallup student poll data, and exchanged feedback about issues within our school. This interactive event created a collaborative, innovative and an inclusive environment, planting a seed that will eventually grow and spread out into the entire community.

[01:43:09] Middle schoolers share that students feel they are not able to express their feelings. Creating safe spaces and having trusted adults within all schools will help students feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and concerns. Students across all grade levels continue to emphasize the importance of mental health and wellbeing.

[01:43:28] Many students simply want to know that there is someone they can talk to and that support them available when they need it. Students continue to identify school safety as an area that deserves ongoing attention and improvement. This is why we have Students Against Violence Everywhere, also known as SAFE Promise Club.

[01:43:47] SAFE helps raise awareness of risk factors like bullying and social isolation, and promotes kindness, respect, and belonging. Students want to feel connected to their school communities, respected by their peers, and included in school activities.

[01:44:03] When students feel like they belong, they are more likely to engage in their learning and build positive relationships with others. After today, take time to reflect on saves for ease. Educating, empowering, engaging, and encouraging.

[01:44:20] During this time of the year, many holidays and breaks are coming up over the next few months. For some students, these breaks can create uncertainty about where their next meals will come from when school meals are unavailable. This is why it is so important to continue promoting school food pantries and community resources to ensure students have access to food during these times.

[01:44:42] Students share that they do not want people to see that they are receiving food, so we are hoping that schools are discreet as they pass out food. Whether the concern is mental health, school safety, belonging, or access to basic needs, students are asking for the same thing, to know that they matter.

[01:45:01] As we move forward this school year, let's continue building schools where every student feels seen, heard, and supported. Thank you so much for your time, and I'll see you next month. - Thank you, Ms. Smith, Dr. McDade. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef, and good evening to all.

[01:45:18] As we begin October, Prince William County Public Schools recognizes several important observances that remind us of our responsibility to ensure that every student is known, valued, supported, and provided the opportunity to thrive. Throughout this month, we recognize ADHD Awareness Month, Dyslexia Awareness Month, and Virginia Disability History and Awareness Month.

[01:45:39] These observances provide an opportunity not only to raise awareness, but also to recognize the strengths, talents, perspectives, and contributions of students with disabilities and learning differences. This week, we also proudly recognize Custodial Services Employee Appreciation Week and the dedicated team members who keep our schools and facilities safe, welcoming, and ready to learn.

[01:46:04] Although much of their work happens behind the scenes, its impact is evident in every clean classroom, cared for building and welcoming space across PWCS. To our custodial team members, thank you for your hard work, your pride in our schools, and the essential role you play in helping every student and staff member thrive.

[01:46:25] That same commitment is helping every student thrive is at the heart of Elevate 2030. By removing barriers and expanding access to resources, support, and opportunities, we are helping students build on their strengths and prepare for success in school and beyond graduation.

[01:46:40] Families are important partners in this work and I encourage them to explore the Parent Resource Center and our special education programs for guidance and support tailored to their students' needs. As we provide each learner with the support to grow, we are also creating opportunities for students to discover how their strengths and interests can shape their path after graduation.

[01:47:01] Tomorrow evening, PWCS will host the first of two college and career fairs at Gainesville High School. The second fair will take place Wednesday, October 14th at Forest Park High School. Both events will be held from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

[01:47:19] This year, these events expand beyond the traditional college fair model. Students will have the opportunity to meet representatives from colleges and universities, as well as trade and technical schools, businesses, and the military.

[01:47:35] They can explore scholarships, internships, employment opportunities and the many pathways available to them after graduation. This is the first of its kind fair. I'm really hoping that our students and

families come out. There will be tons of opportunities available and our business partners in the community are excited to be a part of this year's fair.

[01:47:56] And they definitely have internships available and scholarships available and employment opportunities. Whether a student plans to enroll in college, enter the workforce, pursue an apprenticeship, earn an industry credential, or serve our country, our responsibility is to make sure they understand the opportunities before them and are prepared to take that next step.

[01:48:18] Another important step towards a thriving future takes place also on next Wednesday, October 14th, when students in grades nine through 11, which Marlee just already told us about, will participate in PSAT day. So I will not repeat, she already gave all of our students marching orders on what to do to prepare for PSAT day. PSAT provides students with valuable experiences in college interest testing while helping identify areas of academic strength and opportunities for continued growth. For our 11th grade students, the PSAT

[01:48:53] also serves as the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. This evening we celebrated six outstanding PWCS students who were named semi-finalists in the 2027 National Merit Scholarship program. Their qualifying scores on the PSAT and this recognition demonstrate what is possible when preparation, opportunity, hard work, and the support of our educators and families come together. As families begin thinking about academic opportunities for the next school year, I want to highlight our upcoming specialty program information sessions, and we heard about that this

[01:49:30] evening as well. So as much as we can spread the word, please let your your friends, your colleagues, your neighbors know that we offer specialty programs that allow students to explore their interests, develop advanced skills, and begin connecting their learning to future college and career pathways. Our family engagement series will host a virtual information session for elementary school families on October 15th, followed by a middle school session on October 20th, and a high school session on October 27th. Please note that the elementary and middle school sessions will begin at 6:30 p.m. and the high school session

[01:50:07] will begin at 6 p.m. The high school session begins 30 minutes earlier because it will also highlight career and technical education opportunities available throughout Prince William County Schools. Applications for specialty programs will open on November 2nd.

[01:50:25] I encourage families to begin exploring their options now, attend an information session, and identify programs that align with their students' interests, talents, and aspirations. These opportunities reflect an important commitment within Elevate 2030, preparing students not simply to graduate, but to graduate with choices.

[01:50:46] From the PSAT and college and career fairs to specialty programs, CTE, internships, apprenticeships, dual enrollment, and industry credentials, we are creating multiple pathways for our students to discover what they are passionate about, pursue advanced coursework, and develop the knowledge and skills to pursue it. Finally, as a reminder to our families, schools will be closed to the public next Monday, October 12th, as our employees will participate in professional development.

[01:51:16] Thank you to our teachers, counselors, school leaders, support staff, families, and community partners who continue working together to expand opportunities and help every student build a thriving

future. Mr. Chairman, that concludes the superintendent's report. Thank you, Dr. McDade. Next up is board matters. We have revision of policy 723, entrance requirements, physical examination. Dr. McDade.

[01:51:45] The revision of policy 723, entrance requirements, physical examination and immunization is on for first reading and I have Dr. Sampson here as this policy is owned under his office.

[01:52:00] So if you have any questions for-- - Does anybody have any questions for Dr. Sampson? - Dr. Sampson, can you just give us a short blurb of what this is and how it affects the regulation, what the new changes are?

[01:52:20] - I think the mic is off. Is there any way to get that on? Oh, there we go, yeah. - Let's see, the lines are immunization and physical requirements at entry to those required through state code and by the Virginia Department of Health.

[01:52:40] The updates at this time to the policy are simply updating the office as well as updating some of the nomenclature. There are no major substantial changes at this time. - Thank you. - Yes.

[01:52:57] - Great, thank you. - Yes. - Sir, we will come back and vote on that in two weeks. If anyone has any questions or concerns, please email or call your board member. Up next, we're out to board matters and we'll start with Mr. Wilk.

[01:53:19] - Good evening. Thanks everyone for tuning in tonight, action-packed. I just want to first recognize all the back to school nights that the elementaries had this past week or so plus, almost two weeks. Want to thank our principals, our administrators, our teachers, many of them had three nights in a row, depending on the size and scope of the population of their buildings.

[01:53:45] I tried to get to as many of them as possible, And so, yeah, good events as such. When Mr. Council was here, I was still, I think, reflecting and taking in some of the stuff tonight.

[01:54:02] And one thing I did not think about saying was, and I don't know if this is actually just a state thing or a local district thing, something I think we could look at and examine, is a targeted pay salary scale for those who are special needs teachers or specialists, whether they're SLPs, ABA specialists, OTs, we're competing in a world in the private sector where they can make much more money than what we can do in a public school division.

[01:54:30] And it's not just our public school division, it's all over the country. These are needs that we have. I'm not saying that having all these are going to cure all of our special education problems, but I do believe it would be a step in the right direction. Virginia for itself could follow other states' leads and offer retention bonuses for those who go into the field as we're special education and stay for a certain duration of time.

[01:54:55] Other states have done it. Again, I know Mr. Thousand is gone, but we can show him the clip later. But it's definitely something I think that can be done. One of my big passion projects with special education the next year, maybe beyond, is I would like to see, a couple of things I'd like to see, since we're talking about potentially older buildings, conversions, consolidations and stuff.

[01:55:20] We have a lot of students mod to severe needs, or most severe needs populations. They are probably not going to work independently at a job, like an internship or apprenticeship and things like that. They will probably always need support, aids, always there to be there with them.

[01:55:41] There are programs in schools, one I visited in particular in Ohio, that have buildings designated specifically for transition services and skill development. And I was able, I was blessed to be able to tour this building when I was in Ohio for a business on an unrelated matter, but I heard about this program and its reputation in Dublin, Ohio, and it was phenomenal.

[01:56:04] They bought a former Verizon corporate building offices and converted it into a three story career planning program for our students with our most profound, severe needs. Definitely something to look at. We also, another thing, best practices that I'm learning, there's a lot of school divisions that are now starting to create their own, more or less, autism specialty programs, what would be almost like a private day school or such.

[01:56:32] They house 'em, they put the specialists in the building, this would be another program opportunity or service we could provide families. I look at examples, Lorain City in Ohio, Mentor Village, much smaller divisions, let me say, by size and scope.

[01:56:51] But again, opportunities to learn from other divisions and see what we can do to potentially offset cost. And then again, provide again an opportunity for those students who have the most profound and severe needs.

[01:57:07] Lastly, October's Breast Cancer Awareness Month. It had a major impact on my family a few years ago, and I just want to thank all those who have battled the tenacious disease that's out there, and all those who continue battling it.

[01:57:25] So yes, October's Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and I'm thanking you, thank you. - I do find it ironic that many of the speakers come then they leave and don't hear the entire meeting you know where we actually get to the meat of some of the things that we do and the changes that we're making as a school board so that's just the caveat to what I'm about to say when I ran for school board I stood on the other side of that podium and made a lot of assumptions about what our school board members do and I had no idea how much this role actually involves I ran on a promise to make a difference and I've

[01:58:05] continued to work on that promise people come to this podium they share their views, and freedom of speech is something I believe in and support wholeheartedly, including when that speech is critical of me. But rarely do we as elected officials get the opportunity to respond or set the record straight.

[01:58:23] Unfortunately, when we choose to do this job, it comes at a cost. We don't get to choose how others behave, how they treat us, or what they say about us. What I did not expect was to go on a date night with my husband, who is a combat wounded veteran and have one of tonight's speakers film us and take pictures i personally believe that's an invasion of our privacy and it crosses a line i signed up for this job my family did not i'm asking that their privacy be respected you never know what people are dealing with in their private

[01:58:59] lives and being an elected official does not change that so for anyone considering this role threatening to take our places it's hard work and there's so much that we do that is never seen there's work that moves the needle but never gets talked about there are lives being changed and students being given opportunities to thrive that work matters and that's why i will continue to serve i'll continue to speak up when i see something wrong and i will continue to defend my family um so after that i'm going to talk about the fun things i get to do like go to back to

[01:59:38] school night and visit with families and hear their concerns and talk about what's going on in their schools and and hear from my principals and really see what our teachers do on a daily basis the rooms the classrooms that they decorate the things that the little small touches that people miss a lot and one of the things that I love to see on those back-to-school nights is our PTO and our parent volunteers and I started as a PTO president and and and did all those roles and positions and it's not easy but those parents truly help support our school and I appreciate all that you do so I just want to say thank you to

[02:00:13] those parents I had the opportunity to see a couple of different back to school nights and how they were run and each school does it a little different it was great to see and I and I love seeing our videos even dr. Lateef so but thank you thank you for those of you who come thank you thank you for those of you who do come and stay and listen to the other work and and some of the meat that you get to see but but truly I do believe in your freedom to speak and to say what you believe but I also wanted to address that thank you Lisa's are good evening

[02:00:52] everyone um I missed last the last meeting which I believe would be my first meeting I missed and all the time I've served my daughter had her third child. So we have another Zargarpur, Bastille boy. I'm not going to put a picture up but I'm very excited because the the the older of the boys is four and he will be going into kindergarten at Ashland next year and watching him grow and going you know he's in pre-k right now and the things he's learning and doing it's it's really neat to relive that in a very different space with sort

[02:01:29] of the the the wisdom of already having raised kids and knowing all the mistakes I made and just watching how he's growing up and how my daughter and her husband are handling everything which they're doing a beautiful job so that's I missed last week and I guess I missed the last meeting and I guess I missed some things that were kind of interesting in the meantime I have been getting to some of the back-to-school nights like mr. Wilkhead alluded to sometimes they're on they're all on the same night and there's parts of the Coles District that if I go out to one school I will never get to another so I just pick pick them and rotate them as the years go so this time I got to see

[02:02:08] Saunders Kyle Wilson Signal Hill Coles Elementary and Bennett I'm planning on getting out to some concerts I've been to some football games gonna go see the metal jackets they're gonna be taking a special trip to Lockheed Martin so I'm going to tag along with them so I'm excited about some of the the things that are coming in the in the future and and I'll let you know how things go I hope you all have a great evening we are halfway through the first quarter I hope you are doing your homework you get an interim you make those corrections so

[02:02:42] you can get great grades at the end of the quarter have a good night general all right this has been a busy three weeks since we last met in the intervening time I've been to most of the back-to-school nights in the Gainesville district there was one school I wasn't able to make but that's because there were four back-to-school nights on one night so I haven't figured out how to duplicate myself but I was able to get to all of the schools and that school I missed I'm headed there really soon I was also able to stop in and watch battlefield and Gainesville boys volleyball which was very exciting

[02:03:20] congrats to Gainesville was very close contest and very fun to see the efforts this board to promote the opportunity for boys volleyball put into action. I also stopped in a bull run this week and saw bull run and Reagan battle it out on the soccer field and the volleyball court so that was really fun and just this morning I was at Sudley Elementary School for their Hispanic Heritage Month parade where nearly

600 kids from the school paraded through the parking areas and in front of the school and then sang us a song and the greatest part about this is how

[02:03:56] excited this kids were to be outside on such a beautiful day and I'm sure they will remember this event for a long time and those little special extras are the things that kids remember and that help them feel like they belong so that was a really nice event good job suddenly I am looking forward to stopping in at the College and Career Fair at Gainesville High School tomorrow night I went to this last year and the year before and it was really great so I'm really excited that that we're going to have additional resources there for kids who maybe aren't sure if they want to go to college, but they are definitely interested in a trade school or military or business connections.

[02:04:35] So thank you for expanding that opportunity. Whoever was responsible for doing that, that's a great idea. I love it. I enjoyed back to school nights because it gave me the opportunity to see the level of parental involvement in our schools. I kind of gauged this year by year.

[02:04:52] and while back to school attendance has, I've noticed that it's dropped over the years, I still know there are a lot of parents who do come and they meet the teachers and the other parents in the class and they form those connections and they establish those relationships with the teachers.

[02:05:10] So for those who make the effort, I believe it is still a worthy thing to have. However, I do think we might want to consider what the back to school format could look like or how we could meet families needs better so that more families are willing to take advantage of it.

[02:05:25] The opening events that we have, like the meet the teacher or what are we calling back to, open houses where you can drop off your stuff at your school and meet your, find your classrooms, et cetera, before school starts, those are overwhelmingly attended. Everybody's so excited.

[02:05:40] We capture that excitement to walk into the school before the school year starts. And I think some parents are kind of using that as their back to school night, but there's an important component of back to school that I think we still need to capture. So I appreciate the schools, all the different things you're trying to do to encourage families to come back in late September, especially with Canvas and everything else that's out there.

[02:06:05] Let's see, I enjoyed meeting with the boundary study folks. I had lots of thoughts about the boundary study, the boundary process, boundary considerations. I know that's a very important work that we're embarking on and nothing affects people more or has the potential to create difficult feelings than proposing or adjusting any school boundaries.

[02:06:23] So while I know Gainesville District is fairly stable, we also are affected by the changes in enrollment and outward migration and low birth rates and everything else that's affecting the county. Wow, my time is totally fast disappearing.

[02:06:39] I have lots of thoughts that I will share at another meeting, but that's enough of that. I just want to end with an expression of gratitude. I'm thankful for the privilege of serving the citizens of Prince William County for the opportunity to associate with professional educators of the highest caliber who have the best interests of children in mind every day, who take seriously the charge to tackle the big challenges and embrace the big ideas.

[02:07:01] Thank you. - Mr. Blake. - Thank you, Dr. Lateef. Since our last meeting, I've continued doing the one thing that I value most about serving on this board, and that's really just getting into our schools and engaging with the community and with families and teachers, staff.

[02:07:21] And I have spent time at Enterprise, Dale City, King, and Bel Air Elementary Schools this past few weeks. And as I continue to, I continue just to see this common theme like in the classrooms, and that's our students are just being asked to think, right?

[02:07:42] Not just what's the answer. Again, it's how did we get there? Why do we believe that? Can you explain your thinking? And it's really good to see that they're learning how to critically think. And at Dell City, another thing that really stood out to me was just a whole lot of paper and pencils. So there's a lot of that going on. And so when we talk about technology a lot and how technology is an important tool, but it's also sometimes there's still something really powerful about seeing kids and watching them put pencil to paper

[02:08:18] and work through their thinking and write it down. I also had the opportunity to celebrate the ribbon cutting of the new Occoquan Elementary, our first net zero school, and that building is really truly one-on-one, something special. That building itself is a teaching tool, from its solar arrays to the geothermal wells beneath the school, so our students aren't just learning about the future, in some ways they're really walking into it every morning. And I also had a chance to celebrate the Hilton Performing Arts Center reaching their 15 million endowment goal, and so that's

[02:08:55] important because now they don't run, they won't be running under deficit and a lot of people don't know that we at Prince William County Schools have a partnership with the Hilton Performing Arts students. A lot of field trips and building use and things like that so it's really good to continue that partnership with the arts and for the students. I also got to attend a lot of back to school nights or as many as I could because like everybody, like Justin said, they're pretty much all on the same night but the one that i did i stick out the most was i got to go to minneville

[02:09:33] with ruby rose and i got to be not a school board member so i went in as a dad so it was good to be on the other side and i made sure to tell miss ellis i'm coming here as a parent just so you know don't ask me to know speaking any of that type of stuff coming in here as a parent and um ruby took me around to school like i've never been there i got to see her you know her classroom, what she's been working on. It just, it really hits different when it's your own child and then, but it also reminds you that every child we talk about from this diocese is somebody's

[02:10:08] Ruby Rose, right? So somebody's baby, somebody is trusting us to help create an environment where that child can learn, grow, make mistakes and still belong. And that brings me to my next point because that's especially important this month. We recognize VSBA as bullying prevention month and when we talk about preventing bullying i think we have to go deeper than telling kids don't bully we have to talk about culture school culture isn't what's written on a banner hanging in the hallway it's how a child feels walking through those doors do i belong here does somebody

[02:10:45] notice me is there an adult i can talk to when something isn't right and when i make mistakes will somebody uh be there to hope to hold me accountable but still believe in me because our kids need accountability, they need boundaries, but they also need connection. They need to learn how that disagreement doesn't require disrespect, that being different doesn't make somebody a target, and that

sometimes kids sitting by themselves just need somebody to simply walk over and say, come sit with us. That's how we prevent bullying, not just through policies,

[02:11:21] not just through consequences, but by intentionally building communities where kids look out for one another and that's bigger than our schools. That's parents, educators, coaches, mentors, neighbors, community leaders. That's all of us because strong schools require strong cultures and strong cultures are built. When every child knows I belong here, somebody sees me and somebody cares what happens to me. That's what I want for every student in Prince William County.

[02:11:48] Thank you, Dr. Lateef. Thank you, Mr. Blake. First off, Erica, thank you for those good words and and strong words, and words about being a school board member and what it means to be a school board member.

[02:12:06] I think it is challenging to do what we do, and much of what we do is not in the public eye. And I think, you know, as we heard one speaker say, you know, maybe we should restrict what is said here, this board over the last decade has worked extremely hard to not to restrict any free speech.

[02:12:31] we have worked really hard to do that. And we try to have our sort of process and decorum, you know, so that we can kind of respect everybody's words. And we don't respond, and that's not something we do in Citizen Common Time.

[02:12:46] We've never done that in Citizen Common Time. And most boards that I know don't respond or, you know, talk back and forth at Citizen Common Time. It is the time for the citizens to speak, to let their voices be heard, for the public to see what they have to say, and for the staff and the school division to watch and see.

[02:13:05] I can tell you that many of our principals are at home watching school board meetings. Many of our leaders watch the school board meetings that are not here. Our division takes very seriously public comment. What you don't see is when we go into the back or when we have our conversations with the superintendent, they are typically very spirited and they are many times responsive to what we hear both in citizen common time, what we see in email, what we see ourselves, what maybe our own children might experience, what our neighbor's children experience, that is the work of the school board.

[02:13:40] It is not easy to oversee a 90,000 student school division, 34th largest in the nation. There are a lot of things happening on a lot of different fronts. I am proud to have the honor and privilege to be elected by the people of Prince William County three times for this position.

[02:14:00] I'm honored and privileged to work with Superintendent Dr. McDade and these all wonderful board members who we each have spirited arguments, discussions, debate on a variety of issues. But this board works extremely hard to that when we put something on the agenda, when it's on for a vote, many times it's a unanimous vote because much of the work that goes into getting some piece of legislation or policy change a regulation change that finally makes it up here has been vetted by everyone.

[02:14:32] And I, as chair, really take to heart all of my members' thoughts and opinions, whether I agree or disagree with them ideologically or not. And I have found that doing that makes our policies and regulations far more stronger.

[02:14:49] And I think that has been effective. And that is what has been extraordinarily helpful. Our school board member who sat in as vice chair evening Jen Wall pointed out to me that the new niche

ratings came out and I think Prince William County is 12th in the state this year which is 12th in the state of Virginia is that right huh what happened you lost it she lost it but it's higher than we've ever been before is my understanding so I think we have climbed even higher when I started as chairman we were 26th so we have made

[02:15:24] incredible progress and that progress is monitored on all metrics. It's monitored on academics, athletics, extracurricular, the way we treat our staff, the way we treat our employees. You know add that to last month Forbes magazine ranked us as one of the top school districts to work for in the Commonwealth of Virginia by outside services surveyed our employees and found that to be true so it's it is tough work to be up here and to do this and I'm grateful for all of you who do this and and I believe along with the community we've made

[02:16:01] incredible accomplishments here in Prince William County 12th 12th in Virginia yeah yeah yeah 12th in Virginia so we were we were 26 way back and each year we have gone up a few points and and I and I continue to believe we frankly should be number one but we're getting we're gonna be there soon and so Thank you all for attending. I will leave last. I know I've gone over time. I wasn't here the last meeting, and I think Ms. Wall and I both want to speak to this, but rigor, homework, SATs,

[02:16:34] all of that has come back. It is incredibly important as if you follow what's happening around the country with college admissions with work we we we are facing you know a real threat with artificial intelligence on many fronts and the question is you know can you use it to become more efficient or better at what you do can you utilize it as a tool to become more scholarly or more academic can you use it to be more effective at work can you do something a robot can't do these are the things our students are going to have to choose as they go out into the real world

[02:17:11] And getting them prepared to do that is not easy. It's a difficult work, but it requires a commitment on families and students to do their homework, do the extra work the teachers asked them to do, commit to studying for the exams. And while we recognize there are flaws maybe in standardized tests, they have been brought back with a vengeance to the universities.

[02:17:32] And they are looking at them because they found that when the schools decided to go test optional, the quality of the work that was coming in wasn't what they were used to. And so we do know that students who do well on the SAT graduate college.

[02:17:49] It's just one of the highest correlating factors. So we know if we're preparing you well to do well on the SAT, we're probably sending you out there to do well in college, if that's what you choose. So I can go on and on about that. But, and Mr. Denick really wants me to, but I'm gonna slow down and say, have a good night, everyone, thank you.

